



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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EXPLORE AND PLAN RESULTS SHOW IMPROVEMENT

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Kentucky's 8th- and 10th-grade public school students participated in a statewide administration of the EXPLORE and PLAN assessments in the fall of 2011, and overall school scores moved up slightly in nearly all subject areas tested.

In the 2011 administration, 49,310 8th-grade Kentucky students in 325 public schools took the EXPLORE assessment. The scoring scale for the assessment is from 1 to 25.

EXPLORE Scores from Fall 2006-2011 Administrations

SUBJECT	AVERAGE SCORES						
	KENTUCKY						NATION
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Norms set in 2010*
English	13.6	13.7	13.8	14.0	13.9	14.3	14.7
Mathematics	14.2	14.4	14.6	14.9	15.2	15.3	15.5
Reading	13.8	13.7	13.9	14.2	14.2	14.4	14.6
Science	15.8	15.8	16.0	16.1	16.3	16.3	16.6
Composite	14.5	14.5	14.7	14.9	15.0	15.2	15.5

In the 2011 administration, 48,955 10th-grade Kentucky students in 230 public schools took the PLAN assessment. The scoring scale for the assessment is from 1 to 32.

PLAN Scores from Fall 2006-2011 Administrations

SUBJECT	AVERAGE SCORES						
	KENTUCKY						NATION
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Norms set in 2010*
English	15.6	15.3	15.9	15.8	15.7	16.1	16.2
Mathematics	16.3	16.2	16.4	16.5	16.8	16.8	17.6
Reading	16.0	16.1	16.0	16.2	16.4	16.6	16.7
Science	17.4	17.3	17.4	17.6	17.6	17.9	17.8
Composite	16.4	16.3	16.6	16.7	16.7	17.0	17.2

*ACT, Inc., the parent company for both EXPLORE and PLAN, conducted a research study in the fall of 2010 to provide a new set of national norms for both assessments. This is a common statistical practice for these types of assessments. These new norms serve as national averages for comparison purposes.

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Unlike most other states, all of Kentucky's 8th- and 10th-grade public school students participate in EXPLORE and PLAN assessments.

ACT, Inc. developed College Readiness Benchmarks in English, mathematics, science and reading and applied those to the EXPLORE and PLAN scores. The benchmarks indicate the degree of college readiness of 8th and 10th graders.

On both the EXPLORE and PLAN assessments, the percentages of Kentucky students meeting benchmarks in English and Reading increased from 2010 to 2011. On PLAN, the percentage of Kentucky students meeting benchmarks in Science also increased from 2010 to 2011

The benchmark scores for EXPLORE are:

- 13 or higher on the English Test
- 17 or higher on the Mathematics Test
- 15 or higher on the Reading Test
- 20 or higher on the Science Test

Percentage of Kentucky 8th-Grade Students Meeting or Exceeding Benchmarks in EXPLORE

	ENGLISH	MATHEMATICS	READING	SCIENCE
2006	54%	26%	35%	11%
2007	55%	27%	33%	10%
2008	56%	29%	35%	10%
2009	59%	36%	42%	14%
2010	59%	32%	39%	14%
2011	61%	31%	42%	14%

The benchmark scores for PLAN are:

- 15 or higher on the English Test
- 19 or higher on the Mathematics Test
- 17 or higher on the Reading Test
- 21 or higher on the Science Test

Percentage of Kentucky 10th-Grade Students Meeting or Exceeding Benchmarks in PLAN

	ENGLISH	MATHEMATICS	READING	SCIENCE
2006	58%	23%	41%	15%
2007	55%	21%	40%	15%
2008	61%	22%	39%	16%
2009	59%	23%	40%	15%
2010	60%	25%	43%	16%
2011	63%	25%	44%	21%

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Scores by ethnicity and gender followed trends similar to those found in other assessments.

2011 EXPLORE Average Scores by Ethnicity and Gender

	ENGLISH	MATHEMATICS	READING	SCIENCE	COMPOSITE
African American	12.2	13.6	12.7	14.9	13.5
American Ind./Alas. Native	13.7	14.7	14.0	16.1	14.7
Caucasian	14.6	15.6	14.7	16.6	15.5
Asian	16.0	17.8	15.9	18.2	17.1
Hispanic/Latino	13.2	14.6	13.7	15.8	14.4
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14.4	15.4	14.9	16.9	15.6
Multiracial	13.9	14.8	14.0	16.0	14.8
No Response	11.7	12.7	11.9	13.9	12.5
Males	13.6	15.2	13.9	16.1	14.8
Females	15.0	15.4	15.0	16.6	15.6

2011 PLAN Average Scores by Ethnicity and Gender

	ENGLISH	MATHEMATICS	READING	SCIENCE	COMPOSITE
African American	13.8	14.6	14.6	16.3	15.0
American Ind./Alas. Native	15.2	16.2	16.1	17.4	16.4
Caucasian	16.5	17.1	16.9	18.2	17.3
Asian	17.2	19.4	17.9	19.6	18.6
Hispanic/Latino	14.7	15.9	15.7	17.1	16.0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14.6	16.3	15.6	17.3	16.1
Multiracial	15.7	16.3	16.2	17.3	16.5
No Response	14.3	14.5	15.0	16.4	15.2
Males	15.4	16.7	16.1	17.7	16.6
Females	16.8	16.9	17.2	18.2	17.4

Administration of the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT assessments, which are provided by ACT, Inc., was mandated by Senate Bill 130 (codified in KRS 158.6453) in the 2006 session of the Kentucky General Assembly. The assessments will help schools focus on meeting academic standards across the entire secondary school program. Scores from the assessments will be helpful in measuring student achievement, gauging their readiness for transition and evaluating school programs.

Senate Bill 1, passed in the 2009 session of the Kentucky General Assembly, requires a high school readiness examination in 8th grade and a college readiness examination in 10th grade. EXPLORE and PLAN, respectively, will be used for these purposes, and data from the assessments will be included in the state's Unbridled Learning: College/Career-Ready for All accountability system.

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EXPLORE is a high school readiness examination designed to help 8th graders explore a broad range of options for their future. The exam assesses four subjects (English, mathematics, reading and science) and provides needs assessments and other components to help students plan for high school and beyond.

PLAN helps 10th graders build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address school districts' high-priority issues. The exam assesses four subjects (English, mathematics, reading and science) and is a predictor of success on the ACT.

Both assessments help schools pinpoint areas of weakness for individual students and schoolwide curriculum and make changes to improve learning. Schools will analyze their individual results to inform decision-making.

State law (KRS 158.6459) mandates that the Individual Learning Plans of students whose scores on EXPLORE and PLAN indicate that they need additional assistance in particular subject areas will incorporate strategies to help them improve their performance.

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SUMMARY OF EXPLORE AND PLAN RESULTS -- 2011

EXPLORE

- Average EXPLORE English scores **increased** 0.4 point, from 13.9 in 2010 to 14.3 in 2011.
 - Average EXPLORE Mathematics scores **increased** 0.1 point, from 15.2 in 2010 to 15.3 in 2011.
 - Average EXPLORE Reading scores **increased** 0.2 point, from 14.2 in 2010 to 14.4 in 2011.
 - Average EXPLORE Science scores **remained** at 16.3 for both 2010 and 2011.
 - Average EXPLORE Composite scores **increased** 0.2 point, from 15.0 in 2010 to 15.2 in 2011.
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- The percentages of Kentucky 8th graders meeting or exceeding English benchmarks in EXPLORE **increased** from 59% in 2010 to 61% in 2011.
 - The percentages of Kentucky 8th graders meeting or exceeding Mathematics benchmarks in EXPLORE **dropped** from 32% in 2010 to 31% in 2011.
 - The percentages of Kentucky 8th graders meeting or exceeding Reading benchmarks in EXPLORE **increased** from 39% in 2010 to 42% in 2011.
 - The percentages of Kentucky 8th graders meeting or exceeding Science benchmarks in EXPLORE **remained** at 14% from 2010 to 2011.

PLAN

- Average PLAN English scores **increased** 0.4 point, from 15.7 in 2010 to 16.1 in 2011.
 - Average PLAN Mathematics scores **remained** at 16.8 for both 2010 and 2011.
 - Average PLAN Reading scores **increased** 0.2 point, from 16.4 in 2010 to 16.6 in 2011.
 - Average PLAN Science scores **increased** 0.3 point, from 17.6 in 2010 to 17.9 in 2011.
 - Average PLAN Composite scores **increased** 0.3 point, from 16.7 in 2010 to 17.0 in 2011.
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- The percentages of Kentucky 10th graders meeting or exceeding English benchmarks in PLAN **increased** from 60% in 2010 to 63% in 2011.
 - The percentages of Kentucky 10th graders meeting or exceeding Mathematics benchmarks in PLAN **remained** at 25% for both 2010 and 2011.
 - The percentages of Kentucky 10th graders meeting or exceeding Reading benchmarks in PLAN **increased** from 43% in 2010 to 44% in 2011.
 - The percentages of Kentucky 10th graders meeting or exceeding Science benchmarks in PLAN **increased** from 16% in 2010 to 21% in 2011.

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